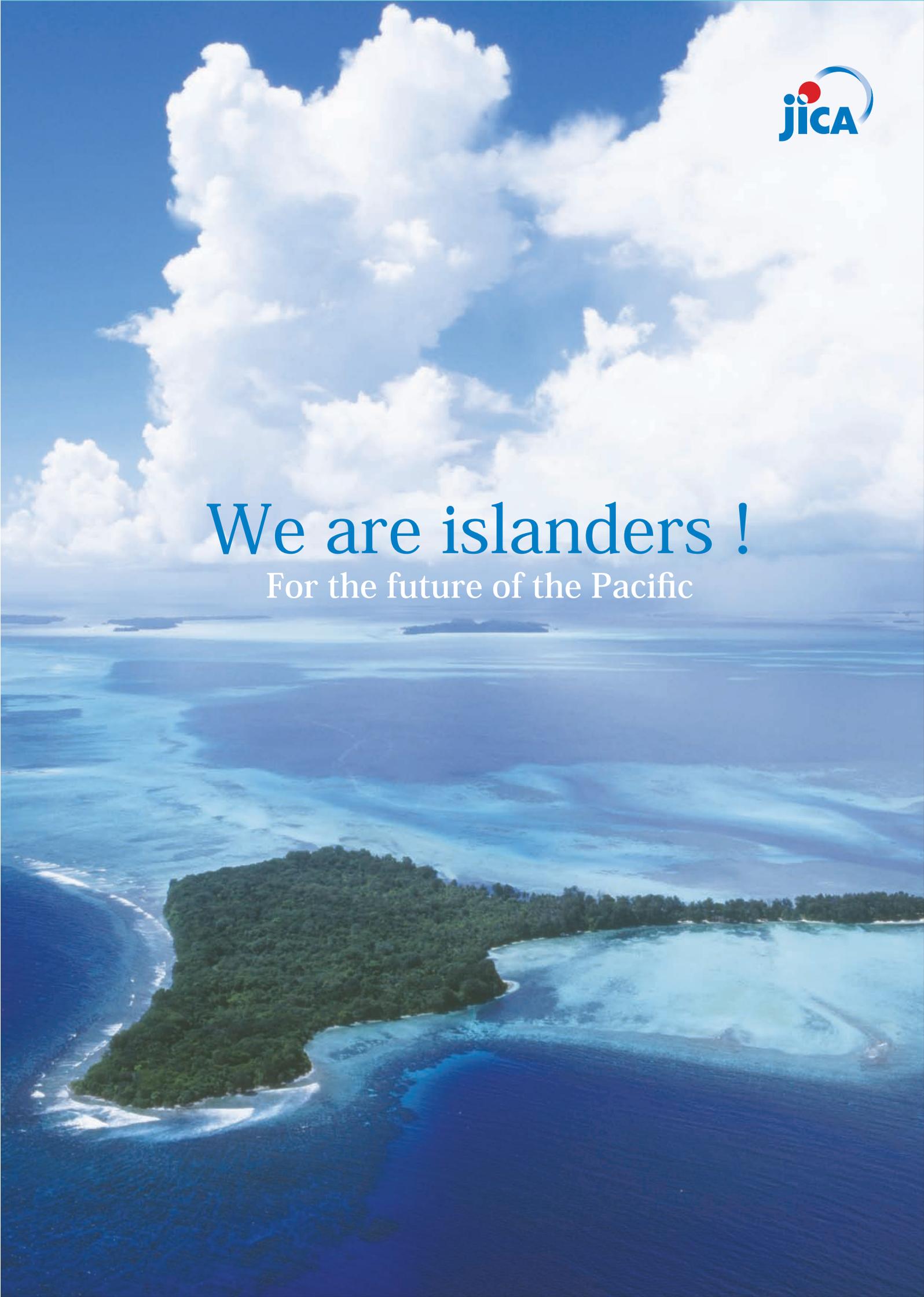




# We are islanders !

For the future of the Pacific



# We are islanders!

## For the future of the Pacific

The Pacific Islands are a paradise that everyone wants to experience at least once in a lifetime. Crystal clear seas shimmer under azure skies, with tropical flora in abundance, and people go about their daily lives in a relaxed and calming atmosphere.

Did you know that approximately 80% of Japan's bonito and tuna—essential parts of Japanese cuisine—are caught in the waters of the Pacific? The region is a key supplier of marine resources for Japan, as well as being an important sea route for the transportation of energy resources and raw materials from Australia. Historical ties also make the region home to many people of Japanese origin and there are a number of countries in the region who have elected persons of Japanese origin as their president.

It is for these reasons that many countries in the region feel close to Japan and support Japanese positions in the United Nations and international community. Therefore, it is important for Japan to provide assistance to the Pacific region for greater stability and development.

The Pacific region today faces a number of challenges brought about by the growing transition to modern lifestyles that are the result of ongoing globalization. These include an increase in waste products, a lack of adequate healthcare and education services, decreasing marine resources, insufficient infrastructure and the insidious threat of climate change. Major factors for these challenges include national territories that are small but spread over a wide area, small populations, small domestic markets and difficult access to international markets. These geographic and demographic factors can be termed together as challenges that are specific to island nations.

As Japan is a fellow island nation, JICA seeks to provide cooperation for nation building and regional support that will harness the great natural abundance of the Pacific region and work to overcoming these challenges with the 14 countries and areas that are members of the Pacific Islands Forum: Fiji, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Nauru, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, Vanuatu, Cook Islands and Niue.

# Links between Japan and the Pacific region

## [Melanesia]



### Papua New Guinea

Rabaul, the current provincial capital of East New Britain province, was home to a Japanese base during World War II. The original Rabaul

Airport was used as an airfield during the war and at that time it was known as the Higashi Airfield. This airfield was later used as a domestic airport, and was buried at the time of the 1994 volcanic eruption. The new airport was later developed in cooperation with Japan. It is about an hour's flight from Port Moresby, which is the national capital of Papua New Guinea and also has direct air links to Japan, serving as an extremely convenient location for Japanese travelers and tourists as well as an export station for fresh tuna.



### Fiji

There are many attractive tourist sites, and more than 20,000 Japanese tourists visited the Fiji Islands in 2007. Fiji is also home to

the University of the South Pacific (USP), a hub for research and education in the South Pacific. USP was established in 1968 through cooperation among twelve Pacific Island countries, and Japan continues to provide a variety of assistance to USP. In addition, among Pacific Island countries, Fiji is the second leading exporter of products to Japan after Papua New Guinea and the top exporter of albacore tuna to Japan.



### Solomon Islands

More than twenty thousand Japanese soldiers died in battle in the Solomon Islands during World War II. Guadalcanal is famous for

its fierce battle during the war and many war veterans and their families, from both Japan and the United States, still visit Guadalcanal and other islands. The waters off the Solomon Islands are an excellent fishing ground for tuna and bonito for Japan's fishing industry, and the fish caught here are processed into dried bonito and canned tuna.



### Vanuatu

More than 20 years have passed since the first group of Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers (JOCV) was dispatched to

Vanuatu. In particular, in the area of primary mathematics, JICA volunteers are collaborating with teacher trainers and school inspectors, who have participated in mathematics training courses in Japan, to improve general mathematics teaching skills among fellow teachers and improve children's abilities in primary mathematics. Provincial level math workshops for teachers have been held during the last two years, and in March 2009, JICA mathematics alumni members and JICA volunteers established the "Vanuatu Teachers' Association for Mathematics (VANTAM)." Efforts to improve mathematics education in Vanuatu are expected to expand through the support of VANTAM.

## [Micronesia]



### Federated States of Micronesia

Following World War I, the Federated States of Micronesia (then known as the South Sea Islands) was

placed under the administration of Japan through a League of Nations mandate, and many Japanese people emigrated to the islands at that time. The first president of the Federated States of Micronesia was Tosiwo Nakayama, appointed in 1979, and the incumbent is Emanuel Mori, both of whom are of Japanese origin. In addition, there are people in the country who received Japanese language education during the period of Japanese administration, and consequently many Micronesian people have a positive image and affinity with Japan.



### Kiribati

Prior to World War II a branch of a Japanese trading company was located on Kiribati, and trade between the two

countries was pursued energetically. At the Kiribati Fisheries Training Center (FTC) Japanese instructors provide training on fishing methods and other skills. Many young graduates of the FTC are currently working on Japanese fishing vessels. In addition, on Christmas Island in Kiribati, the Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency (JAXA) maintains a downrange station to receive radio transmissions from rockets launched from Tanegashima Island in Japan.



### Marshall Islands

Many people in the Marshall Islands have an affinity with Japan, and with a supermarket called MOMOTARO and a

conglomerate called CHUTARO, together with words such as "Chashimi" (for sashimi) and "Chanpo" (taken from the Japanese word "sanpo" (to walk)), many Japanese words and phrases are deeply rooted in the language and culture of the Marshall Islands. In addition, the word "Emman," which is used to indicate agreement or when something is agreeable or good, is very similar to a Japanese word.



### Palau

Palau was administered by Japan for 31 years until the end of World War II, and the children of Palau received Japanese language

instruction during that time. There are still senior citizens above the age of 75 who can speak Japanese and more than 800 Japanese words have been assimilated into the Palauan language, including "daitoryo," "denki," "daijobu," and "okyakusan." More than 30,000 Japanese tourists visit the beautiful islands of Palau each year.



### Nauru

Independence Day on Nauru is January 31, and this date marks the day on which the surviving Nauru people were returned to

their island home (January 31, 1946) after being forcibly removed by Japanese forces during World War II and relocated to the islands of Truk (now the Chuuk islands) of the Federated States of Micronesia). Like many countries in the region Nauru still bears signs of the battles that took place there during World War II.

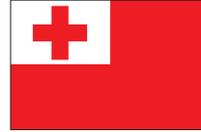
## [Polynesia]



### Samoa

In Samoa the word "sashimi" is used as it is in Japan and slices of tuna are called "sakana" (the Japanese word for fish), which are eaten in

the same way as in Japan, with soy sauce and wasabi horseradish. These words and customs were picked up from the Japanese tuna fishing boats that ply the waters of Samoa. The people of Samoa buy and eat fresh tuna from the fish market that was constructed with assistance from Japan. Freshly caught fish are sold at the market which is a vital hub for the people of Samoa.



### Tonga

Tonga is the only country in the Pacific region to have formally adopted "soroban" abacus lessons as part of the primary school curriculum.

The efforts of JOCV and Japanese NGOs over many years to provide Japanese language education and to engage in activities to spread the use of the soroban abacus have resulted in Japanese language being adopted as an elective subject in high school graduation examinations. The father of Musashimaru, a former Sumo wrestling Yokozuna grand champion, was born in Tonga. Rugby is also popular in Tonga and Tongan nationals are active as rugby players in Japan's national corporate league.



### Tuvalu

In 2008 the most numerous tourists to Tuvalu by nationality were Japanese. Most of these tourists were participating in ecological

tours run by NGOs, or were directly involved in development aid work. The major industries on Tuvalu are agriculture and fisheries. In 1986 Japan concluded an agreement on fisheries with Tuvalu and since then, Japanese vessels have been engaged in fishing in Tuvalu's economic waters. The fishing rights as paid for by Japan under the agreement are an important source of income for Tuvalu, which lacks other natural resources.



### Cook Islands

The Cook Islands comprise fifteen islands that are self-governing in free association with New Zealand, and have a total

area approximately equivalent to Tokunoshima, an island in south-western Japan. The government is making great efforts to develop tourism and each year nearly 80,000 tourists visit the Cook Islands from all over the world, although not in great numbers from Japan. Japan follows New Zealand and the United States as a major export destination for the Cook Islands, with the main export item being pearls.



### Niue

Niue is the largest coral island in the world and is making efforts to develop its tourist industry. However, there are still only a few

Japanese tourists who venture to Niue. In 2006, out of the 3,008 tourist arrivals, only six people were Japanese. In October 2008 five high school students from Niue were invited by the Japanese government to visit Japan to engage in an exchange program with young people from Japan for the purpose of deepening mutual understanding.

# Activities by JICA in the Pacific region

## Marine Resources

Coastal marine resources such as fish, shellfish and sea cucumbers are the main source of protein and also a valuable source of income for local residents. However, given the high price that coastal marine resources can fetch and the ease with which coastal resources can be harvested, there is a serious concern that overfishing could cause depletion of coastal marine resources.



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Since 2006 JICA has been implementing cooperation in Vanuatu aimed at recovering depleted coastal resources and applying appropriate management techniques to ensure sustainable use of resources as well as to contribute towards improved economic opportunities for rural communities. The communities and the Fisheries Department continue their efforts to enhance and maintain marine resources, within established "tabu" areas (no-take zones).

In addition, cooperation is being implemented for the purpose of enhancing research and education functions at the Palau International Coral Reef Research Center (PICRC), which was constructed through Japanese assistance. Furthermore, recognizing the importance of harmonizing environmental conservation with development, JICA places importance on collaboration in activities at PICRC towards the achievement of the goals set out in the "Micronesia Challenge," an effort by Micronesian countries and territories to protect the natural environment of the region as a whole. Through cooperation at PICRC, JICA is also contributing to improving capabilities for environmental conservation in other neighboring countries.

At the School of Marine Studies at the University of the South Pacific in Fiji, JICA volunteers are engaged in the promotion of seed production activities for freshwater shrimp and post harvest techniques for fisheries products. It is anticipated that such techniques will create opportunities for communities and residents in remote areas as well as outer islands to acquire valuable sources of income.

## Climate Change

Tuvalu has gained the world's attention, not for its beautiful and pristine nature, but because it is thought to be the island nation where the impact of climate change is becoming most dramatically apparent. In 2009, in response to this issue, a joint research project by Japanese and Tuvalu research organizations was launched with the support of JICA and the Japan Science and Technology Agency (JST). The island atolls in the tropics are formed when coral builds up in a ring formation, with strata of dead coral and fragments of foraminifera being laid down like sand to create the islands. However, in recent years the impact of marine pollution caused by waste water and effluent from human living has caused a drastic reduction in the coral and foraminifera. This has hindered the formation of beaches and has been judged to be one of the causes of land erosion. The joint research was implemented to identify mechanisms that would encourage the formation and preservation of coral atolls, with research and development activities concentrating on eco-engineering methods. JICA will also implement a basic survey of the atolls and conducted a human impact assessment, on the basis of which it is planning to issue a proposal for short-term measures.



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In Fiji, JICA has made a significant contribution to reducing damage inflicted by cyclones, which regularly hit the Pacific region, by improving the precision of cyclone information through the construction of the Fiji Meteorological Service (FMS) and the provision of meteorological equipment. Additionally, third-country training programs have been implemented for the purpose of enhancing meteorological forecasting capabilities and building a human network for 11 countries in the region, including Fiji.

In Papua New Guinea, JICA is also providing assistance towards establishing sustainable self-sufficient rice cultivation and production that will be able to withstand the effects of climate change.

## Waste

Due to growing urban populations, changes in lifestyle and an increase in imported goods, Pacific Island nations face a common challenge in dealing with increasing volumes and types of waste.



Since implementing a regional project formulation study on waste management issue in 2000, JICA has partnered with the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP), a regional organization with its secretariat stationed in Samoa, to make active efforts in tackling this issue. One of these activities has been the adaptation of a new system for final disposal site management using the semi-aerobic landfill system that has been introduced by JICA experts. The system has been expanded to various countries in addition to Samoa, including Palau, Vanuatu and the Federated States of Micronesia, which has proven useful in improving their capacity of waste management.

On the basis of initial cooperation of Japan, SPREP member countries consequently approved a regional solid waste management strategy in 2005, and currently each country is promoting waste management improvement based on this strategy. Since 2006, JICA, collaborating with SPREP, has been assisting 14 countries and territories in the region in formulating individual national plans on solid waste management as well as strengthening the capacity of human resources and sharing model case studies.

In conjunction with assistance to improve final disposal sites, cooperation has also been provided in Fiji and Palau towards reducing and recycling waste. The project in Fiji is trying to utilize the successful experience of Shibushi City in Kagoshima Prefecture in reducing and recycling waste and to create a "model case" for the promotion of "3Rs" (Reuse, Reduce, Recycle or Return\*). It is expected that the experiences gained through the implementation of this project will be expanded from Fiji to other islands in the Pacific region.

For further details, please refer to the JICA pamphlet "Our Islands, Our Waste, Our Future—Japan's Cooperation on Solid Waste Management in the Pacific Region."

\* Many island nations find it difficult to recycle waste domestically. Therefore it is also important for such countries to return waste to the developed countries where the products originated and where recycling services are available. It is for this reason that the "third R" also incorporates the concept of "return."



## Healthcare

JICA is implementing cooperation to deal with challenges in the healthcare sector in the Pacific region, with a particular emphasis on human resource development. By combining this with additional assistance for infrastructure development, including medical and research facilities, JICA ensures that through the provision of both infrastructure and personnel-related support (hardware and software) a synergetic effect is created.



Many aid agencies are promoting immunization programs as a means of preventing the spread of infectious diseases in the Pacific region and these efforts have produced results, including the eradication of polio. However, there are many countries in the region that do not possess adequate management capacity for cold chain transportation, which is needed to transport vaccines appropriately. As a result many children in the region cannot receive safe immunizations. In order to resolve this issue, in 2003 the declaration to enhance immunizations was adopted, and Japan has been joined by Australia, WHO and UNICEF in cooperative efforts towards this goal.

JICA is utilizing the New Pharmaceutical Services Center constructed in Fiji with Japanese cooperation to implement training on policy and planning formulation and implementation pertaining to immunizations in 13 countries and territories in the region. In addition, community efforts to prevent malaria are being promoted in the Solomon Islands at the Solomon Islands Medical Training and Research Institute, which was constructed with Japanese cooperation. Through the establishment of appropriate diagnosis and treatment systems and the enhancement of the capabilities of medical practitioners, the malaria morbidity rate is decreasing and efforts implemented by Japan have been highly evaluated locally.

## Education

The islands of the Pacific region have small populations and face a serious challenge in terms of capacity of human resources, due to limited education opportunities and a "brain drain" phenomenon, whereby talented persons leave for overseas destinations.



The University of the South Pacific (USP), which has its main campus located in Fiji, is a public university established by 12 Pacific nations in 1968. Thanks to the construction of a satellite communications network provided through Japanese cooperation, it is now possible to engage in two-way distance learning among the various campuses of USP scattered in the region, and currently approximately half of the university's 21,000 students receive their education in a distance learning format. USP is playing a central role in human resource development in the region.

Papua New Guinea has a geographic terrain that features mountainous regions and many remote islands that make access difficult. The construction of the National Education Media Centre through grant aid from Japan has enabled the provision of instruction on the production of educational programming and model school lessons, which can then be broadcast to regional schools by television. By utilizing these television lessons the local population has become more aware of the importance of education, and students' results have also improved.

In the Federated States of Micronesia, the Marshall Islands and Palau, Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers (JOCV) and Senior Overseas Volunteers (SOV) have engaged in efforts to improve the quality of mathematics education in primary schools. In Vanuatu, JICA volunteers and JICA alumni members' collaborative efforts are being advanced through nation-wide workshops and the Vanuatu Teachers' Association for Mathematics (VANTAM) was established to promote and support mathematics educators in Vanuatu.

## Infrastructure

In the countries of the Pacific region, many of the independent island nations are finding it difficult to maintain and improve their infrastructure. To date Japan has been active in engaging in the development of infrastructure that is vital for economic growth in the region, including roads, bridges, water works, power, port facilities, ferries and airports.



Cooperation in the freight and public transportation sector provides support to regional economic activities. Such projects implemented by Japan include: the Pohnpej Circumferential Road project, the redevelopment of Port Moresby International Airport in Papua New Guinea, and the project for the construction and development of port facilities at Port Vila in Vanuatu, which is scheduled to be launched this year. Additionally, Japan has engaged in the development of water supply system in Fiji, making a significant contribution to efforts to respond to the increasing demand for water and improve water quality.

The Samoa Power Sector Expansion Project has gained particular attention in recent years. This is a project to support the power development plan of Samoa, which includes construction and renovation of power plants as well as improvement and rehabilitation of transmission/distribution lines. The aim is to provide a stable supply of electricity to all regions of the country, thus leading to economic growth. This project is the first ever ODA loan to be extended to Samoa, and is also the first to be funded under the Accelerated Cofinancing Scheme with ADB (ACFA)\*, which is signed by the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and JICA.

\*ACFA is a framework agreement that enhances co-financing operations utilizing ODA loans in the fields such as investment promotion and energy efficiency. It is established based on the Enhanced Sustainable Development for Asia (ESDA) initiative agreed by Japan and ADB in 2007.

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